



Utah Governor's Office *of* Economic Development

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OFFICE ■ OFFICE OF CONSUMER HEALTH SERVICES ■ PROCUREMENT ASSISTANCE ■ OFFICE OF
RURAL DEVELOPMENT ■ STATE SCIENCE ADVISOR ■ UTAH OFFICE OF TOURISM**



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Partnerships for International Development



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BUSINESS TRAVEL ORIENTATION



MEXICO



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FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

- **MOST OBVIOUS DIFFERENCES:**

- Language (English vs. Spanish)
 - Although in large Mexican cities most businessmen speak English, it is worth considering having a Spanish speaking person to accompany you and serve as Guide while negotiating your way for the first time in a new country
- Culture (Business vs. Tradition)
 - Doing Business in the United States brings an almost immediate result. In Mexico traditional business creates the need to “know” your counterpart before business starts.
- Security (Media information is Scary...)
 - Although there is a true need to be careful, as much as you would going to any foreign country, things are not really the way they are described by the Media.



CHALLENGES / SUCCESS FACTORS

Challenges

- Foreigner
- Language Barrier
- Work Approach
- Relationships

Success Factors

- Perception Skills
- Blending In
- Spanish, Few Words
- Access to High Levels
- Networking Capabilities
- Business Etiquette



MEXICAN PROFILE

- Mexicans are very proud of their history and tradition
- As a rule, they are proud of their country and patriotic
- There is a high sense of respect and hierarchy
- When interested, they are persistent
- They can also be very patient
- One word of caution: in order not to offend, sometimes they may say “MAYBE” or “YES” instead of “NO”.



CONDUCTING BUSINESS

- It is customary to have “gatekeepers” and security. To be permitted in, always carry an ID.
- Mexicans prefer meetings to conference calls; however, conference calls are welcome.
- Business conducted at mealtimes: a very common practice.
- Visits and time of meetings.
- Dates. Please bear in mind official holidays that are different from those in the United States.



CONDUCTING BUSINESS

- Try to learn about the differences in the legal systems: Common Law vs. Roman Law.
- Learn the difference between a Notary Public in the United States and a “Notario Público” in Mexico.
- Please consider using professional translators and interpreters.
- It is important to have your presentations and promotional materials correctly written in Spanish.
- And, about you: do you really speak business Spanish? If not sure, contract an interpreter.



BUSINESS PROTOCOL

- Who pays?
- Going Dutch?
- Non-smoking areas
- Personal space
- Businesswomen
- Business cards
- Impatience
- Meeting time
- Punctuality



BUSINESS SCHEDULE

- Most private sector companies keep schedules that are similar to those in the United States.

Example:

- Morning office hours: 09:00 – 14:00
- Lunch time: 14:00 – 15:00
- Afternoon office hours: 15:00 – 18:00

- Government offices usually work very long and unusual hours. Example:

- Morning office hours: 10:00 – 14:30
- Lunch time: 14:30 – 17:00
- Afternoon office hours: 17:00 – 22:00



MEALS

- Although duration of meals is not necessarily over 1:30 hours for breakfast and lunch, meals can be scheduled as follows:
 - 07:30 – 10:00 / 11:00 Breakfast
 - 14:30 – 17:00 Lunch (and, keep in mind that lunch is the main meal of the day, not dinner)
 - 19:00 – 21:00 Coffee, cocktails, happy hour
 - 21:00 Midnight/beyond Dinner



NAME STRUCTURE

- **UNITED STATES**

- (1) First Name (given)
- (2) Middle Name (maternal surname [2a] or given [2b])
- (3) Last Name (paternal surname, family name)

Examples: John P. Smith, may be:

John(1) Peter (2b) Smith (3)

John (1) Peterson (2a) Smith

Thus, the correct way to address him is:

Mr. Smith.



NAME STRUCTURE

- **MEXICO**

- First Name or Names (given) = to (1) & (2) above
- First Last Name (paternal surname, family name) = to (3) above
- Second Last Name (maternal surname) = (2) above

Examples: José Luis Sánchez Pérez is:

José (1) Luis (1) Sánchez (3) Pérez (2a)

Thus, the correct way to address him is:

Mr. Sánchez, and not Mr.Pérez.



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TITLES

- Mexico has an interesting way to address most businessmen and businesswomen: the use of a Title.
- Most business cards show, before the name, abbreviations such as: Lic., Ing., MC, Dr., and the like.
- What these represent is the area of academic expertise of the individuals. Although not the only expressions, they usually mean they obtained a degree in the following fields:



TITLES

- Lic.
 - Attorney at Law
 - Business Administration
 - Economics
- Ing.
 - Engineer (in any of the various disciplines covered by the field of Engineering)
- DG
 - Graphic Designer
- MC
 - Master of Science
- Dr.
 - Physician
 - PhD in any discipline

So, he or she may be “Licenciado(a) + last name”
OR, you may simply address that person as “Señor + last name” or Señora + last name”.



SAFETY TIPS

- Credit Cards
 - Carry only one, and keep the rest at a safe place in the hotel.
 - In restaurants, request that the terminal be brought to your table, so you that you are always in control.
- Currency Exchange
 - Dollars in cash, are difficult to exchange (except at the airport, or your hotel). It is safer to bring travelers checks or pay with a credit card. Please check the Peso – Dollar rate of exchange, to have a good idea of what things cost.
- ATMs
 - Most hotels have ATMs. They are better and safe to use. Regular bank ATMs provide access to anyone holding a bank card.



SAFETY TIPS

- Hotels
 - Mexico's business life is hectic. When visiting Mexico try to have confirmed hotel reservations.
 - Most U.S. and international hotel chains provide accommodations in Mexico. They are very safe and convenient.
 - Keep your valuables in the hotel safe.
- Taxi Cabs
 - Don't flag a cruising taxi. Use one from a taxi stand (called "sitio") or a hotel taxi. These are safe taxies.
- Rental Vehicles
 - Although rental vehicles may be a choice in some areas, large cities have parking problems. A taxi cab is preferable for your business meetings.



SAFETY TIPS

- Restaurants
 - Avoid the street vendor stands, even if the smell and look of the food they are selling is enticing.
 - Hotel restaurants are safe and there are chains of commercial restaurants (such as Sanborns and VIPs) that can be found all over the country. They are not expensive, are clean and safe.
- Water
 - Drink bottled water, which can be found everywhere. Hotels usually overcharge for bottled water, but a lot of corner shops (such as OXXO and Seven Eleven) are everywhere.



SAFETY TIPS

- Documents and Other:
 - Passport (always keep a photocopy with you, so if it gets lost you can contact the U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate to obtain a permit to return to the United States.
 - Money. Take with you only the cash you may need for a specific purpose.
 - Keep a Wallet Card. A copy of is available from our office.
 - Register your trip. In case you have no contacts where you are going, make sure you register your visit with the corresponding U.S. Embassy or Consulate.



VERY IMPORTANT

- Please make sure that you have:
 - A valid passport with enough duration to allow you to return to the United States
 - A valid Visa if you are traveling to a location requiring one
 - A return flight, either scheduled or open, but always a possibility to return home
 - A valid credit card in your name (either personal or company) with enough credit to cover all your expenses
 - A Wallet Card with the required information. You can obtain one from our office.



VERY IMPORTANT

- Please make sure that you:
 - Have valid medical insurance to cover your visit to a foreign country
 - Carry a good cell phone with coverage in the foreign country, according to your requirements
 - Are familiar with your cell phone company requirements for dialing home from wherever you are. A Telephone Wallet Card for this purpose may be obtained from our office.
 - Have a valid international driver's license, if you are planning on renting a car
 - Have the number of the U.S. Embassy or the U.S. Consulate for the area of your visit (in your Wallet card).



VERY IMPORTANT

- The above suggestions do not mean that you are going to the end of the world, into a savage land, and will be completely unprotected.
- These are merely suggestions to give you peace of mind and establish the environment for a very pleasant trip.
- MEXICO is not what the Media has portrayed. It is a reasonably safe country, where the above suggestions will serve to make you feel comfortable during your stay, and provide the assistance you may require, should the need arise.



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VERY IMPORTANT

**WE HOPE YOU HAVE
A VERY SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS TRIP
AND
A VERY PLEASANT STAY IN MEXICO**

- - - - -

Should you require in-Mexico assistance,
our Representative is:

Guadalupe M. de Escalante

Phone: 01(52-55) 5544-5142

E-mail: escalante@mexis.com



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